

## THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

LOCAL NEWS AND HOME READING,  
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NEWS ITEMS, NOTICES AND REPORTS MUST BE SENT TO THE OFFICE NOT LATER THAN THURSDAY EVENING OF EACH WEEK, IF THEY ARE TO APPEAR IN THE CURRENT NUMBER.

TRANSIENT NOTICES, FIFTY CENTS FOR RIGHT LINES, EACH INSERTION. FOR LARGER SPACE AND PERMANENT RATES, APPLY AS ABOVE.

## CAMPAIGN ON OPERA.

We had not intended to say anything further about the opera at present, feeling well satisfied that both sides of the question had been given a hearing; but stumbling upon an interview with Campanini, we found his opinion, so strikingly like our own that we cannot refrain from publishing them. In reply to a question put by a *Times* reporter, with regard to his managing the Metropolitan Opera House, he said:

"I can't answer that question definitely yet. One thing, though, I am certain of, and that is there will be no stars. I shall have no stars. A good company and that is all; everything will be on a grand scale and popular prices will be charged. The stars get too much money entirely. I wish the stars would get to the device, myself as well. Why, it is a perfect shame the large salaries they command. Just think of Patti getting \$20,000 a night. It is enormous! The whole company have to work just for the stars and the manager."

That is just the point. Neither five thousand nor one thousand dollar stars are necessary to the rendering of an opera. But a good conductor, an orchestra, a chorus, subordinate soloists, scenery costumes and properties are necessary, and if the most of these are very bad, as they generally are, the performance is ruined in spite of the best work of the most brilliant stars. It is like seeing both play with a company whose acting excites nothing but derision and disgust, and whose costumes are an affliction to vision. After seeing such exhibitions many say we cannot understand how anyone can be so enthusiastic over the theatre; it is so unreal; it excites only our sense of the ridiculous. We should say so, Mr. Booth has learned a thing or two of late years, and sometimes has quite a fair company. What has made Mr. Irving's theatre the pride of the English public? His own acting, in part, no doubt, but the main cause is his wonderful attention to details, and his splendid company, every member of which can act. When this system is applied to the Grand Opera we shall have something worth going to.

## SIDEWALKS.

At a recent meeting of the Village Improvement Association a plan was presented by Mr. H. M. Barrett, by which it is believed we could soon secure miles of good sidewalks at a moderate expense.

The plan was cordially approved by the Association, which passed a resolution requesting that the matter be brought before the taxpayers at the spring meetings.

The difficulties of laying good walks under any of the existing laws are well known, and it seems impossible to make a sidewalk assessment and tax, which does not result in leaving the tax a lien upon the property, and compel the township to bear the whole burden of the cost, at least for many years to come.

It is proposed to ask the voters to appropriate \$1,000 at the spring election for the "construction of sidewalks." It is then intended that the owners of property shall petition the Township Committee to construct a sidewalk of a particular kind, either of stone or ashes, and shall agree in said petition to pay one half of the cost of the walk.

The Town Committee, if they approve the petition and receive security that the owners will pay their half of the expense, may order the walk built.

For example: Suppose a petition should be presented from property owners on the south side of Monroe Place, requesting that a stone walk, four feet wide, be laid from Park Place to Spruce Street. The distance is about 1,000 feet, and the cost of such a walk would be about \$750.

The Township would pay one-half, or \$375, and the owners would pay the other half besides their share of the whole sum raised by taxes for this purpose.

The advantage of the proposed plan is that no debt is created; that the Town Committee may use their discretion as to granting any particular petition;

that the individuals, whose property is benefited pay a trifle over half the expense, while the general public, who get an immediate advantage from every foot of good sidewalk, also are taxed in a slight degree to pay for this improvement; and, further, that the Committee can authorize stone in some places and ashes in others, where by reason of a large frontage it would be impossible to obtain the consent of the owners for the construction of a stone walk.

One thousand dollars raised in this way would probably secure about one mile of substantial sidewalk, for some lot owners would be willing to pay more than half the cost of a walk which would connect them with the Centre. The plan is so simple and so free of legal obstacles that we trust it will be adopted by the voters.

Every mile of sidewalks, permanently constructed, will add to the value of the property it affects, and will contribute to increase the value of property everywhere within the town.

At the present time Bloomfield needs but pay more attention to sidewalks than anything else, and if our voters shall decide to raise \$2,000 for this purpose, instead of \$1,000, the money will be spent in a manner certain to benefit the town and add to our population.

## THE VILLAGE LIBRARY.

Upon a pretty knoll, in a little village not more than twenty or thirty miles from Boston, stands a monument of the War of the Rebellion. It is not a group of statues of hideous form, covered with scant apparel, nor yet an ambitious shaft pointing to the sky. Instead of these, there is a handsome building octagonal in shape, with gothic windows, within whose walls are ranged shelf upon shelf of useful books, and in the centre a tablet to the memory of those who fell upon the bloody battle fields of Virginia. Every day in the week its doors are open, and books are taken and returned with unceasing regularity. The expenses are paid by a small township tax. The library is as much of a necessity as the church or the school house. Resort to it is had as constantly as to the market or store. Upon its shelves are food for the brain, free as the air, and as full of vitality. Its influences permeate the community as the life-giving blood reaches every part of the body through the arteries. How much it has added to the happiness of the community no man can tell! How much of tidiness to the farms! how much of comfort to the homes!

In many a village these libraries have done more than this. They have become the resting place of authors; reading, study, and discussion have formed the literary habit. Families have developed a sort of culture; hence the school-mistresses, masters, clergymen, and scholars.

It is true of intellectual things, as of physical or religious matters: "As we sow so shall we reap." Money—money—money—one time of the name. We could almost wish for a home in some valley of Rasselas, where thirst for gold and fame are forgotten, and one finds enjoyment in his pigs, his horses, his cows, his books, and his pictures; yes, even his wife and children; where no one knows whether he be rich or poor—so only he is happy. Such contentment study brings; there is a growth, a ripening, a mellowing of the mind. Not that one should be a glutton even of books, as one of whom it was said by a shrewd observer: "He reads so many books that I doubt whether his brain can live under the load," but food three times a day, in reasonable quantities, and of a digestible character. Your lover of books gathers then about him like old friends, some strong and vigorous, some fiery, or bright, some easy, affable, and pleasure loving. He samples them like old or choice wine, and comes to have a reverence, a regard, which time only increases. If he find his diet too strong, too enervating, "he leaves off for a moment gorging with books, reads only for discipline or equipment and writes," full to overflowing with knowledge and truth. But his books, he cares not where he finds them—under the thatched roof, or in the miner's hut, they are just as dear to him—for are they not his friends?

We think we have said enough. We are not all millionaires. Food, clothing and shelter must be provided. Who shall give us the good books which we have not money to buy? We have no library stock to sell. Gothic windows or marble columns are beyond our wish—but the books—not such as some good man is ready to give away, having no use for himself, but chosen books, such as you run to the city for and circulate among your neighbors—not ten cent novels—not twenty cent—nor thirty cent, but you know. Don't you think we ought to have them?

## TAXATION.

With the present month we close another year in the financial history of our town. Its results will compare favorably with the past. The State and County taxes have been paid, most of the debt due the gas company wiped out, and only a small amount of School indebtedness left to remind us of the large amounts which we have expended upon public improvements. In a word, we are practically out of debt, with good schools, fair roads, a handsome park, gas and water furnished throughout the town. Moreover, we have the ability and willingness to meet all proper demands not only for carrying on the public enterprises already begun, but for adding others of recognized value and practicality.

There is, however, one matter which,

in fairness to ourselves, ought to be remedied. We refer to the method of levying taxes. A great railway magnate remarked, the other day, in speaking of his investments: "I'm not a philanthropist, and the sooner that's understood the better." His position is not far from the general attitude in reference to taxation. Charity and business are widely dissociated both in their objects and methods. While many are willing to contribute liberally toward objects of local interest, the support of great public works is solely a matter of business to be met and prosecuted solely in business ways. Premising that, in the matter of assessments, exact uniformity is impossible, there should be earnest efforts to secure that result.

Both as individuals and as a community we need a more careful revision of our assessments year by year. The present method is defective in that no general plan is followed throughout the town. Sales of property are taken as forming a reasonable estimate of its value, but the adjacent property is rarely supposed to be affected. Whole sections of the town, as in the upper neighborhood, or Brookdale, where auction sales have taken place at low rates, are kept far above what these sales would suggest as a fair market value. Improvements made are not always rated at fifty per cent. of their full cost value as represented. In fact, no rigid rule seems to be adopted to ascertain and register the precise amount of real and personal values throughout the town.

As a community also, we are not fairly treated. The progressive element which invaded our councils ten or more years ago, left its impress in increased valuations, whose effect has been made permanent by the arbitrary action of the County Board of Assessors, in adding to the valuations returned by the townships. As a result, we find ourselves far above the townships upon either side of us in the valuations placed upon our property; and must bear an increased amount of taxation for the benefit of our neighbors. This can be met by one or two expedients; by increasing their assessments; or by a reduction of our own. The former is impracticable; the latter, in justice to ourselves, ought to be adopted. The decision of the courts, in the case of East Orange, that no amount can be added to the return of the assessor, makes our position impregnable.

If it is objected that the assessor cannot take the responsibility of a general reduction, then let it be made by the town committee, the same authority which ten years ago, made the unwise advance. But better than this, let both town committee and assessor work together for a thorough and systematic overhauling of assessments for the benefit both of individuals and the township at large.

In all this let no one think that he is specially attacked. We have no quarrel with individuals, or censure for those whom we believe have conscientiously done their duty. Our wish is simply that this growing evil may be checked. This, as we have said, can only be done by a careful revision by the assessor under the direction of the town committee.

## REAL ESTATE.

## Wanted to Rent.

Houses from \$15 to \$50 per month; also, furnished houses, from \$40 to \$100 per month. As I am now making up my list for the season of 1884, I respectfully request all owners of Real Estate, in Bloomfield and vicinity, desiring to rent, sell or exchange their property, to place the same on my books at their earliest convenience. No charges except sale, rental or exchange is made.

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In the Morris neighborhood, The homestead dwelling of the late Peter Groshong, with barn and one acre of land. The buildings are nearly new and in perfect order. The house has eight rooms, and the barn has stalls for two horses. Good well and eastern. Plenty of fruit and shade. Immediate possession. Will be sold at a low price and on easy terms to close the estate. Apply to THOS. C. DODD, Executor.

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P. O. Address.

BLOOMFIELD, N. J.

BLOOMFIELD

Savings Institution.

ANNUAL STATEMENT.

January 1, 1884.

ASSETS.

Loans on Bond and Mortgage (first liens) ..... \$50,550 00

United States Bonds (market value) ..... 6,750 00

Loans on Collateral Securities ..... 1,100 00

Interest due and accrued ..... 1,869 01

Cash on hand and in banks ..... 9,248 60

Safe and furniture ..... 200 00

\$69,717 61

LIABILITIES.

Due depositors, including interest at 4 per cent this day credited, \$65,892 76

Surplus ..... \$3,824 85

The above is a true statement of the condition of the Bloomfield Savings Institution on the morning of January 1, 1884.

JOSEPH K. OAKES, V.-Pres't.

THOS. C. DODD, Treas.

CHAIRMAN PELICURET, Auditing Committee.

WM. H. WHITE, JAMES W. BALDWIN, Interest is credited to depositors every six months—on the first day of January and July—for the three months or six months then ending. When credited it is thenceforth treated as principal.

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LIFE

Insurance Company,

NEWARK, N. J.

AMZI DODD, President.

ASSETS (Market Value) ..... \$36,353,620 00

LIABILITIES (4 per cent. Reserve) 33,453,714 44

SURPLUS (Massachusetts Standard) 2,900,905 56

SURPLUS (New York Standard) ..... 5,113,815 56

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